



# **Educational Visits & Overnight Stays Policy**

***We aspire to embrace the Gospel and its values,  
Celebrating uniqueness and diversity.  
Our learning, within an enterprise culture,  
is based upon trust and respect  
which define our relationship within the world  
family.  
Everyone Matters.***

## Version Control

Current version	Previous version	Summary of changes made
V1 – July 2017	March 16	Trip values amended to included uplifted costs from tour operators
		Diocesan requirement for Mass attendance on a Sunday
		Automatic removal from school trip replaced with Headteacher’s decision

Policy Impact Statement	
<b>Policy:</b>	
<b>This Policy has been implemented:</b>	
Fully	
Partially	
Occasionally	
Not at all (give reasons why)	
<b>What revisions need to be made:</b>	
To the Policy?	See Version Control Above
To its implementation?	

## Educational Visits & Overnight Stays Policy & Procedure

## **Guiding Principles**

The core principles underpinning educational visits are that:

1. The Diocesan Director for schools has reminded us that all schools taking residential trips that provision must be made for pupils to attend Mass in order to fulfil their Sunday obligation. Should there not be reasonable and practical opportunities to attend Mass then arrangements should be made through services of prayer and worship as appropriate.
2. They need to be inclusive and affordable. Therefore all visits offered to students will not exceed £950 per student. A 'major' visit is classed as a trip where the price is £315 - £950 per student.
3. The identified Group Leader should always strive to find cheaper alternatives for visits wherever possible.
4. Visits must be well planned in advance taking into account the operational needs of the school in terms of the school calendar, cover, availability of key resources (such as the minibus). The notice periods identified in these procedures are important in ensuring that visits are properly planned and that risks are properly assessed. Please ensure that these are observed, where they are not it is possible that a planned visit might not be authorised.
5. Visits should be open to as many students as possible.
6. Visits should ideally have a cross-curricular theme which should be identified in purpose of the visit on the proposal form.
7. Educational Visits Proposal Forms are available outside the staffroom on the notice board.
8. An educational visit proposal form **must** be filled in at least one half term in advance of a visit to enable all activities to be appropriately managed. The notice period will be longer, up to one whole term in the event of a residential visit or adventurous activity. This type of visit will require more stringent planning and must be approved by the LA.
9. The identified Group Leader will be responsible for ensuring that the visit is fully costed, ensuring that all elements of the visit / event are included and that the trip will break even and should liaise with the finance office over any Parent Pay or any general administrative costs. If it is likely that an additional subsidy is required, this should be identified at the time the visit proposal is made.
10. Only following the proposal form being signed off by the Deputy Headteacher should any firm planning towards an educational visit take place; no bookings of coaches or venues should be made. Following the proposal being made the visit should be entered by the Group Leader on to the Visit Management system (EVOLVE).
11. The identified Group Leader will be responsible for all planning in relation to the visit and for ensuring the process for authorising the visit, within appropriate timescales, is completed.

12. All completed EVC proposal forms are kept centrally in the EVC file located in the School Business Manager's office and are available to refer to on EVOLVE.

General guidelines that illustrate good practice in relation to Educational Visits are provided on the Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) Intranet site under Health and Safety.

### **Rationale**

To ensure all educational visits contribute meaningfully to the five strands of every child matters, namely, be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

St Nicholas Catholic High School has a tradition of providing a wide variety of education visits that enhance the learning of students. This policy reflects the aims and values of St Nicholas Catholic High School and is based on the set of principles above. It aims to support staff in the systematic planning, communication and financing of educational visits to ensure that all visits contribute meaningfully to students' learning as well as enriching their experiences as a whole.

What makes us distinctive as a Catholic school is that we care more about *who* a child becomes than just *what* she or he becomes. In this way, we seek to ensure that each student is not only prepared for society when they leave school but equipped to make a positive contribution for its betterment.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **The Governing body**

The governing body, through the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), will ensure that mechanisms are set up within the school for school trips to be planned effectively and safely.

Step by step procedures for planning and organising trips should be explicitly and unambiguously mapped out. This should also include a plan for managing a serious crisis should, for example, a major event occur.

#### **The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

The School Business Manager will act as the Educational Visits Head (EVH) and is responsible for the School authorisation of all residential visits. All forms will be processed through the School Medical Co-ordinator who will act as Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) co-ordinating all residential visits via the Evolve system.

The EVH, EVC (Finance Assistant) will:

- support any teachers planning a residential trip
- ensure all aspects of school policy and LA policy are being adhered to

- offer support to any trip leader regarding the management of budgets relating to school visits
- liaise with the SLT
- provide or organise any relevant In-Service Training

Staff may need advice on

- relevant local, national and international regulations (see School Business Manager)
- risk assessment processes (see School Business Manager)
- staffing of trips (see Deputy Headteacher)
- liaison with parents (see subject leader or relevant Assistant Headteacher)
- liaison with tour operator (see subject leader or relevant Assistant Headteacher)
- managing budgets (see Finance Assistant)

The Deputy Headteacher will co-ordinate a calendar of proposed visits and inform parents each year of the major visits taking place the following school year.

Given that the school wants to encourage teachers to organise trips for the benefit of its students, this level of support needs to be in place to provide the necessary staff development for those without relevant experience.

### **The Group Leader**

The Group Leader is the member of staff intending to organise the educational visit and lead staff and students during the visit.

The Group Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, including direct responsibility for the students' health, safety and welfare.

For larger visits a Deputy Group Leader may be appointed, however, ultimately the Group Leader retains the responsibility for managing the visit.

The Group Leader must:

- Be approved to carry out the visit, suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school and LA's policies and procedures
- Plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and students and ensure effective supervision of what they do (guidance on safety and supervision is included below)
- Communicate to other staff on the arrangements and organisation of activities and students during the visit – eg provide an itinerary, register of student grouping and inform of any specific medical or dietary requirements of those taking part.
- Be aware of the school's emergency contact procedures for during and out of school hours (see EVH/EVC for detail) and be able to act in accordance with them.
- Identify another member of staff who can deputise and lead the visit in the event of the Group Leader's absence/illness and keep them informed of visit arrangements.

- Make sure that the paragraphs below, shown in italics, are included in the initial visit letter to parents and follow through any necessary action immediately.

*'All appropriate staff will be consulted as to whether they consider each student to be reliable and responsible enough to be included on this trip. Following confirmation of a place on the trip, if a student's poor behaviour results in a member of the Senior Leadership Team being called to their lesson, receiving a Senior Leadership Team Friday Night Detention or being Out of Circulation you will be informed of specific expectations that will have to be met by your son / daughter for him / her to be considered to participate on the trip. Your support will be required to ensure that your son / daughter understand these expectations.*

*Please note that should a student receive a Fixed Term Exclusion, the Headteacher reserves the right to withdraw the student from the trip.*

*Any student withdrawn will forfeit his / her deposit and non-refundable monies associated with the trip.*

*We are required by our insurers to remind you that the cost of non-accidental damage caused by any students whilst on the trip will be charged to the parents / carers concerned.*

*On top of a school administration charge of £25, you will also incur any charges from the trip provider for a change of name as a result of your child being removed from a trip.'*

### **Safety and Supervision Guidelines**

When considering organising an educational visit, make a preliminary visit and consider the intended activities and organisation of students on the visit to minimise risk. Carry out a risk assessment using LA Health and Safety Risk Assessment form. By law teachers taking students on visits are responsible for students at all times and are required to take precautions that a reasonable parent might take. Supervision, however, can be exercised in various ways:

- a. Direct supervision – where students and teachers are together.
- b. Indirect supervision – where a teacher may be at a central point from which they can see students, and be seen by them.
- c. Remote supervision – where students can be allowed to move unaccompanied but must remain in groups or pairs in a safe environment but will report to a teacher at stated times and places. Students must always know where to find the teachers.

### ***'Common Law' Duty of Care***

- A teacher has a duty of care for young people under his/her supervision
- Higher duty expected of teachers as a result of their specialised knowledge
- The age and ability of the students together with the nature and location of the activity help determine the degree of supervision required.

Please remember:

1. Students should never be allowed to go about alone. Normally it is expected that students will be under the close supervision of teachers but it is recognised they will be working in groups or pairs.
2. It is not enough to verbally warn students about potentially dangerous activities or places (e.g. cliffs, water and machinery). Teachers must personally ensure students' safety even though warnings have been given.
3. Teachers should eat at the same time and in the same place as the students. Sending students off to a different place while staff are in a café is not adequate supervision.
4. If teachers are unsure as to whether an individual or group of students can be relied on to follow instructions or behave responsibly during a visit they should **not** be taken. Group Leaders should liaise with EVH/EVC if they have concerns about individual students.
5. If teachers have any questions over the safety aspects of a visit then don't hesitate to consult Subject Leader (SL) or EVH/EVC.
6. The teachers responsible for leading the visit should satisfy themselves about the fitness of students to participate fully. Careful note should be taken of any information provided by parents. Liaise with SL and/or Form Tutor/Year Leader if unsure.
7. Drugs and medicines. Teachers are not required to administer drugs or medicines to students in their charge. They may do so, in line with the school's administration of medicines, provided that:
  - they are given to the teacher by the parent
  - written authorisation for the teacher to administer them is given together with precise instructions for their use
  - the teacher holds and administers them throughout the visit.

## **Risk Assessment**

### **What is a risk assessment?**

Risk assessment is an examination of an activity in order to identify what could cause harm to the people who are involved, (ie students, staff, volunteers) estimating the likelihood of the harm occurring and checking to ensure whether or not sufficient precautions are being taken to prevent it.

Don't be put off by the terminology of risk assessment. For example:

- A **HAZARD** is something with the potential harm to you – eg transportation of a group of students, an area where water is present, mountain walking in remote areas, anywhere machinery is operated.
- **RISK** is the chance or likelihood of the harm occurring.

- **CONTROL MEASURES** are what you do to reduce the risk to minimise someone being harmed – eg making sure students wear safety belts and are supervised when being transported on a visit, ensuring students and staff have the correct equipment for an activity, ensuring activities are supervised by competent and experienced leaders (this includes activities given by external providers.)

Increasingly, venues and activity providers have their own risk assessments of their sites and activities. Group Leaders are strongly advised to obtain copies to study. These should be built in to their own Risk Assessment and relevant information must be passed on to the EVC, accompanying staff and students to act on during a visit activity. Please note that the risk assessment provided by attractions / venues are not a substitute for your own risk assessment. The visit risk assessment should cover as a minimum:

- Staffing (student to teacher ratios; CRB and associated safeguarding issues)
- Transport
- Activities
- Supervision arrangements
- Conditions (weather; requirement for specialist equipment)
- Downtime arrangements
- First aid

Where risk assessments are not available from the venue or activity provider, the Group Leader must carry out their own using the Health and Safety Assessment form.

When carrying out a risk assessment, it is important to bear in mind the Health and Safety Executive's 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment.'

- Look out for the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done
- Record your findings
- Review the assessment and revise it if necessary

Consult with the EVH/EVC for further guidance.

### **Staff authorised to drive minibuses**

It is important to appreciate that the handling characteristics of a minibus differ from a car in a number of important respects. Establishments should therefore not rely solely on competence to drive ordinary cars.

The Cheshire Standard is for a minibus driver to:

- Be over 21 years of age and have an existing D1 on their licence
- Have at least four years driving experience
- Have no moving traffic convictions
- Have completed specific training and assessment on minibus driving recognised by the County Transport Co-ordinator

- Be medically fit for the activity and submit a form summarising their medical history to the County Medical Adviser.

Staff wishing to complete CWaC Minibus Driver Assessment should consult with the EVH/EVC.

Drivers as individuals have legal responsibilities to ensure that:

- The vehicle is roadworthy and has been checked prior to every journey
- They drive at all times in accordance with the law
- Students remain seated and well behaved
- Seat belts are used
- For any long distance journey (over 2 hours) schools are strongly recommended to have another adult present, who can supervise the students
- There is a first aid kit and mobile phone.

### **Transporting students in private cars**

#### ***Insurance cover for private motor vehicles:***

The responsibility for insurance of private vehicles belonging to employees and voluntary helpers (including parents) rests with the owner or driver concerned. Any CWaC employee planning to use his or her own car on the Authority's business must check that their policy is fully comprehensive and permits 'business use.' It is essential that employees hold the appropriate insurance.

For non-employees (ie volunteers or parents) there is no similar 'business use' requirement; social, domestic and pleasure use normally suffices. However, a volunteer driver who is undertaking regular journeys should be advised to notify the relevant insurance to protect the interests of the driver if an accident were to happen.

If the private cars of both employees and voluntary helpers, such as governors or parents, are used to assist with transport on school visits then Group Leaders must take reasonable precautions to satisfy themselves that such drivers and vehicles are suitable for the proposed use and this must be reflected in the risk assessment form associated with the trip.

Parents should be informed if their children are to be carried in private cars, and be given the opportunity to indicate if they do not wish their children to be transported in this manner.

Where private cars are used to transport students it is advisable that staff and voluntary helpers driving students are not put in a position where they are alone with a student. The Group Leader should arrange for another adult to travel with the group or arrange a central dropping point for all students rather than individual home drops. Parents should be informed of where the central drop off point is and an approximate time of arrival.

### **Collection of money for Educational Visits**

The following provisions around collection of trip monies apply:

1. All monies will be collected in line with the prevailing policies on charging, income and banking.
2. Group Leaders should establish with the Finance Officer that a visit is taking place as part of the process for proposing a visit, i.e. at the time. This is so that the systems for recording monies can be well planned using the school's system for managing school fund monies.
3. It is expected that contributions towards the cost of educational visits are made directly by students via Student Support rather than Group Leaders collecting monies. This is to ensure that the online payment system is used, following the school procedure in this area, and that monies are collected in a timely manner.
4. Payments are to be made via Parent Pay. Payments can be made by cash or cheque if for any reason the parent/carer does not have access to Parent Pay. Where parents/carers contribute to visits paying by cheque, please ask them to make them payable to 'St Nicholas Catholic High School' and to write the student's name and form group on the back of the cheque.
5. For larger trips instalment payments might be appropriate and a payment plan can be established to enable parents/carers to pay in this way via Parent Pay. Group Leaders should identify suitable dates for instalments and levels with the school's Finance Assistant. This will include a non-refundable deposit element, with a minimum £25 school administration charge (unless in exceptional circumstances) should students be withdrawn or changes made, other than by the school.
6. Full responsibility for monies collected will remain with the Group Leader until such time as the monies are transferred to the Finance Office and all payments have been appropriately receipted by them.

### **Invoice Payments or Entry Fees**

Pass on any invoices from visits to the Finance Officer as soon as possible instructing the school office to pay them out of contributions or any other source of funding.

If the visit requires payment in advance or on the day(s) of visit, make arrangements for payment with the Finance Officer giving as much notice as possible. Ideally, this should be identified at the planning stages.

### **Insurance**

Organisers need to ensure that all trips have the relevant insurance cover in place with this information identified on the Evolve form. In most cases this will be the block insurance

cover paid for by the School. Where third party insurance is used through tour or travel companies it is advisable to get a copy of the full insurance document for central trip records and to identify what is or is not covered to parents where appropriate.

### **Protocol for Managing Educational Visits**

#### **Steps to follow**

##### **Section A**

1. Work out a budget for the trip and ensure that there are sufficient funds, making allowances for unforeseen developments.
2. The Group Leader should identify staff willing to accompany the trip, and ensure appropriate ratios and a gender balance.
3. Consult the senior manager (EVC) responsible for outdoor activities on the nature of the trip and complete a proposal form to seek approval for the trip.
4. Consult the Deputy Headteacher who is responsible for school diary matters to ensure the trip is feasible.
5. When agreement from SLT received, book the centre and agree on the aims of the visit. Check whether the centre is licensed and check the list of qualified instructors.
6. On obtaining from the trip provider, ensure that all details are as stated in the school diary.
7. Where possible, the Group Leader should make a preliminary visit to the centre to become familiar with the facilities.
8. Send a letter to parents/carers outlining the cost and nature of the trip. Ensure that you have consent forms, signed by parents/carers. (NB No student can participate in an activity without consent.)
9. Please note the following:
  - Publicity regarding letters and application forms for an educational visit to be carried out from a minimum of five school days prior to the letters/forms actually being available to individual students.
  - Letters and forms will be available from the Finance Office or another designated point within school, from a specified time on a nominated day.
  - Once forms have been returned, if the trip is oversubscribed, and under the supervision of the EVH/EVC, names will be drawn at random to ensure fairness to all. (Allowing for gender / age balance as appropriate and where relevant. Also see section B below)
10. It is not appropriate to raise funds in order to reduce the cost of a trip or to provide extra activities or equipment.
11. Ensure that parents/carers and students understand the purpose of the visit, which may be in the following categories:
  - i) Curriculum linked i.e. part of NC entitlement and/or exam related
  - ii) Represent the school in a formal manner at specific functions whilst away
  - iii) Support the extra-curricular life of the school and have a taught preparatory phase in school.
  - iv) Provide adventure holiday style experiences or tours, which are not either part of a NC or exam related.

## Section B

It is also essential that parents and students should understand the criteria by which participation in educational visits that fall in categories ii, iii, iv, is allowed:

- The acceptance of a consent form from a student expressing a wish to attend the particular trip does not mean that student is automatically accepted for the trip.
- For any student whose previous behaviour on trips may exclude attendance on a particular trip, parents must already have been notified as to the clear reasons why this action has been taken.
- Staff accompanying a trip must therefore communicate concerns to the relevant Assistant Headteacher with explicit reasons as to why the parents/carers and student should be informed that participation in the future is unlikely / impossible.
- It is required that a discussion is held with Year Leader/AHT of the year groups going on the trip, particularly with regard to any students whose behaviour precludes attendance for any reason. Both parent/carer and student again should be aware of the circumstances that can lead to this decision.
- A student will not be allowed to go on a visit unless full payment has been made a week before departure. In addition any money already paid to secure a place may be non-refundable depending on the impact on the educational visit and the company's policy.
- Any matters relating to prior financial considerations from other trips need also to be considered. In the event of there being outstanding monies due for a previous trip then the student cannot be considered for a place on any subsequent visit. This would need to apply to any sibling wishing to attend a school trip.
- If a student has to be sent home for disciplinary reasons there will not be any refund of the costs (this is because the viability of a visit is dependent, in part, on the total income generated to support the visit prior to departure).

For a student with either a known or recently-diagnosed illness, the extra responsibility and risk for the teacher and the group needs to be considered carefully. Parents normally want their child to have as normal an education as possible, and schools and colleges need to be mindful of their duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## Section C: Group Leader

- Keep a journey file, which contains a copy of all letters, lists and information given to parents/carers.
- Ask for details of students' medical and dietary needs.

- Ensure that first aid knowledge and expertise amongst the participating staff is appropriate to the nature of the trip. There should also be an appropriate number of first aiders for the numbers of students involved in any trip or activity.
- Book transport. If the school minibus is to be used, ensure that you have sufficient appropriately qualified drivers.
- Make arrangements for the collection of trip monies. Ensure that students receive any appropriate grant support, if available.
- Produce a programme planner which describes a programme for each day, supervision details and emergency arrangements.
- Carry out and produce a risk assessment for all activities on the trip.
- Approximately one month before the trip, arrange a meeting with parents to discuss arrangements, the expected standard of behaviour and so on.
- Arrange for the EVH/EVC and one other senior member of staff to act as first and second contact for the duration of the visit.
- Give EVH/EVC a full list of student contact details.
- Take a school's mobile telephone on the visit to use in case of emergency.
- Hold a meeting of all staff involved to arrange supervision duties and other matters.
- Establish a code of conduct.
- Be familiar with the emergency procedures to be adopted if an accident happens.
- After the visit, evaluate the programme.
- Report any accidents/problems to a senior member of staff.
- All financial dealing, including costing, payments, and final accounts submitted for audit, must be conducted in accord with the school's financial procedures. (See Finance officer for further guidance.)

Reviewed by: Student Welfare & Progress Committee	Date: 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
Ratified by Governing Body	Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
Review of Policy Due By	Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> July 2018